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Presidents' Prologue

So now the end is near, and I reach the final curtain....

Well not quite, I still have a few loose ends to tie up after I hand over my President's badge to John Bacon at the end of December. It was great to have three people wanting to stand as President, it showed that there was a recognition that the Morris Federation was a good viable organisation with a vibrant future that people wanted to take on the leadership and to compete for it. The range of skills of the three candidates was impressive. Although John won, I would extend my thanks to both Penny Brookman and Gordon Newton for standing. The voting response showed that many teams had thought carefully about their vote, and who they wanted to take the Federation forward, and John now has a clear mandate. I would hope that the skills and qualities that both Gordon and Penny have to offer, could also be called upon in some way, each having something different to contribute.

But the Morris Federation is only as strong and as proactive as the membership itself. At the AGM it was asked what the committee planned for the 2000 year celebrations. We stated that following discussion at last years AGM we had come to an agreement with the other two Morris organisations about regional days of dance, and we had proceeded with organising dancing at the Dome. Both of these were discussed, arrangements made, and then published it in the winter newsletter, with a proposal on how it could be organised locally. To date, the only one that I am aware of is a regional day of dance by teams in Yorkshire, which has also been reported in the newsletter.

The Morris Federation committee can only be a

co-ordinating function, providing a framework and focus for teams to come together, but if teams are not proactive in responding there is little the committee can do. We did discuss at an AGM three years ago, whether there was mileage to having area reps who could take the lead on co-ordinating regional events (much as both the Ring and Open Morris have) but it was thrown out at the time. Maybe with such a large membership, it is worth revisiting the idea, so that there are local people who are able to take a local lead on events, and take advantage of liaising with Ring and Open Morris teams on a local basis. But if you are doing something for Year 2000- then please write it up for the newsletter and let Kevin Taylor (who manages the website) know well in advance so that he can put something on the Morris dancing website pages (as per the Morris on the Internet Strategy, also published in the newsletter).

I was intending, at this point, to give a friendly warning to the incoming President and the new members of the committee. At each AGM in the front row are at least five members of Red Stags Morris (and a bear called Theodore), all of whom know the constitution and standing orders inside out. All of whom are willing to challenge decisions, make points of order, and contribute their views. They are a "delight and a pleasure". They like to make sure that the meeting is run according to the rules. You may have seen me grimace slightly when I have asked one of them to speak- thinking " oh no, what have they picked up on now!"

I have come to know them very well, so I was very stunned to hear of the collapse and then death of David Pritchard. If you don't know

him, but have been to the AGM, he was the tall big guy with fuzzy hair and a beard, (in the front row, next to his wife Christina and the bear Theodore), who kept bouncing up and down making points of order. Its a reminder to us all to enjoy and make the most of the time we have- "its not what we are given, but what we do with what we have got". David contributed to the Federation in his own way, I am pleased to have had his support and my thoughts are with Christina, his widow. I am sure that next AGM there will be four Red Stags, one bear called Theodore. and somewhere David who will keep bouncing up and down....

And so now the end is really here, and I want to give my thanks to members of the Federation Committee for supporting me through out the past four years and especially during the time I was ill . In particular Beth and Rachel were exceedingly helpful, and I am grateful to them. My thanks also go to Red Stags both for their "help" at AGMs, and also for their help on other Morris issues through out the year; to Kevin Taylor for taking on the website and taking time to tutor various members of the committee in how to use computers and the Internet. But my final thanks must go to my husband and partner, Jeff, who is not a Morris dancer, yet suddenly found himself caught up in this world of dancing, bells, drinking and social history, who has struggled to understand it, found new friendships with in it, and has selflessly supported me in taking on the role of President. and has done his best to deal with messages and enquiries when I have not been available. And he has just about forgiven me for letting him be taken off to dance in the Panhegarty set in Scarborough this year.

So long, and thanks for all the fish

Live long, dance long, and prosper

Janet Dowling

David James Pritchard 11th February 1955- 25th October 1999

Most people who have seen Red Stages dance will remember David, the large dancer in the orange rag-coat. His love of dancing was as infectious as it was obvious. Sadly, David died on 25th October 1999.

David was also a member of Eastleigh Folk Dance Club, and Woodfidley clearly finding great fulfilment in dancing with his wife Christina. He had a fine sense of humour, was a patient teacher and had the ability to make everyone feel included in the performances. He left treasured memories wherever he went, from Yorkshire to New Hampshire, sharing a quiet drink or calling a dance.

He was academically gifted and quick witted. One may-day morning whilst waiting for the dancing to start, David was asked why, if our dancing makes the sun come up, do we do it so early ? He replied that dawn dancers were like electrons. Current only flows because of all the electrons, but individual electrons can't decide what the current will be. Similarly, the dancing all over the world makes the sun come up, but cannot unilaterally make it come up later.

His funeral was attended by more than 200 relatives , friends and University colleagues. Our love and support go to Christina, his wife and to Peggy, David's mother, who have requested that donations be made in his memory to:

Macmillan Cancer Relief,
FREEPOST,
15-19 Britten Street,
London SW3 3BR

An excellent dancer has been cut down-but the dance goes on.

Andy Anderson (for Red Stags)

Editorial

This edition, as many others, has been plagued with the usual round of technical difficulties, and unforeseen disasters, however, here we are.....

I must apologise in advance for articles not included in this issue. In particular for the Key figures in the Morris article supplied by Ian Craigs and Chris Metheral of High Spenn, this was the main technical difficulty, and I assure you it will be published in the next issue. For others who are still waiting for their submissions to appear in print, please be patient, they will.

As this is the post AGM issue, it can of course not go without a mention..... So nice to see so many sides attending, and blessed by good weather, a great weekend. I was lucky enough to be teamed up with Red Stags on the Saturday tour, which was nice, as not knowing too many people this time, and not dancing, it was good to be with some familiar company. Although only acquaintances, they all made me feel very welcome, and it was with great sadness that I received the news of David Pritchards death. Thanks to Andy Anderson for his obituary.

In this issue :**Presidents Prologue** Janet Dowling's last stand. Farewell from our President.

General, Beth Neill, Secretary also bids a fond farewell.

Financial Services: Reminders for the New year from Rachel Pinkney

Archive Adrian Williams has his first inclusion as the new Archive Officer, reviewing Lancashire Bonds by Alan & Les Bonds, a copy of which is lodged with the archive.

Notation From Rhian Collinson this issue, a North West dance for 6 people, courtesy of Trevor Owen,.

Dome Update. Janet Dowling keeps you up to date with Morris and the Dome doings. She will continue to do this into the New Year.

Survey Time: Janet Dowling is once again conducting a survey on the age of us Morris Dancers, an update on the one carried out four years ago, together with information requested on animals, beasts mascots, alive or not.

Gift Rapper: AGM Report.

Doc Rowe Collection: Jane Marsh & Steve Cunio have sent information about this amazing collection, which currently finds itself homeless.

Knockhundred Shuttles at the London Palladium.

Flashback: A report from Sidmouth '99.

New Committee Members

Scarborough Fayre 2000.

See you all next year!
Jude Barrett

General



This was my last AGM. So it maybe was apt that this was the first time there had been an election for an officers

post since that in which I was elected – back in 1992. However, last time it was a low key affair – only two of us vying for position of secretary, this time there were three Presidential candidates. It may reflect a good image of MF in that there was such interest in carrying the organisation forwards. You will all have read the “manifestos” prior to the AGM and realised how lucky we were to have three high calibre candidates. Anyway, if you haven’t already heard, John Bacon was elected as our new President, with about half the votes, with Gordon Newton and Penny Brookman getting roughly equal votes. He has since attended a committee meeting (as did the other two new officers) and promptly found himself allocated several actions, even though he doesn’t take over till the New Year.

Not only that, there were two last minute candidates for the post of Archive Officer, neither of whom are likely to stand down for the same reasons as the current one (Lynn was expecting her second baby as the AGM took place!); Adrian Williams of Redbornstoke Morris and Geoff Watkins of Pebworth Morris. After a show of hands vote, Adrian was elected in to the post and then started a hunt for friends with big lofts after hearing the size of the archive.

I would like to thank Fee Lock who stood

and was welcomed as my successor as Secretary. She seems extremely well suited to the post – I don’t think it will be long before the initial “what do I do about...?” phone calls die down.

With all that excitement, there wasn’t time for much other business. The minutes should accompany this newsletter so you can read in full all that happened. On the admin front, we in the MF committee were all very very impressed by how hard Mortimers had worked to create a really fun weekend.

So this is my farewell. I have offloaded about half the boxes and files to Fee already although, like John and Adrian, she doesn’t officially take over till the New Year. It may look like quite a lot to her but it doesn’t seem to have created the extra space I was hoping for in my study and other rooms around the house!

Thanks you to those of you who have been supportive and understanding when I haven’t been able to deal with your queries by return – and who have been appreciative when I have! I am really looking forward to having a little more time – it is already mentally allocated to a dozen hobbies and projects.

I will however, be seeing the yearbook project to its completion. It will be quite a task but one I think will be worth the effort.

If you still want to stay in touch with me – write an article for Morris Matters!

Beth Neill

Financial Services

You will be receiving renewal notices, hopefully by the end of the month. Do remember that your Public Liability Insurance starts for the new year on the day I receive your form and remittance.

As for group Personal Accident Insurance, I am not having much joy getting a quote at the moment, so am leaving the form as it is. Please therefore take note of the comment on the bottom of the form.

Should your side wish to take up Newsletter subscription only, please ask for the appropriate form.

Happy Christmas, and all the best for the New Year,

Rachel



New Archive Officer - Adrian Williams

Lynn Rogers has happily "retired" with a second child. Now I've got the job. I dance and play with Redbornstoke Morris, a men's Cotswold team based in Ampthill, Bedfordshire. I am also a member of Downes-on-Tour, a very occasional team. I have danced Morris for about 14 years. I am a research scientist by trade and hope to get the archive index computerised before I retire. My first job is to review two new obtained books for the Archive. Here goes.

Lancashire Bonds by Alan & Les Bond

The poems in this book are the work of two brothers, Alan and Les Bond, who linked forces to write them, and who shared a common bond in their love of all that is Lancashire, especially those aspects we laugh at (blokes in wigs, petties and so on) and those things we take pride in (comics, singers, the red rose - the list is endless).

Sadly, Alan is no longer with us. He is drinking in the celestial equivalent of *The Duck and Trumpet*, Oswaldtwistle, his favourite watering-hole. Les is in good heart (as proved by the surgeon who has by-passed it), still penning poems along the same lines he shared with Alan. Les introduces us to Billy Myers, "*who's allusaving chip-pan fires*" and we see that his style hasn't changed since losing the man who shared his tandem.

The pages are bursting with Beano-style fun, but in here too there's some serious poetry and not a few tears - look at *T'Seawnd o't'Sea and No Time Fer Skrikin'*.

If Stanley Holloway were alive today, he would

be reciting these masterly monologues and making Dugdale (who put the wind up Hitler) as famous as Albert Ramsbottom, who also appears herein as a barber with a pole fashioned from a stick with a horse's head handle.

These poems will bring a tear to a glass eye. Well, that's what the back cover said. Sorry, I cheated and scanned it all in. The next book was thoughtfully printed on a deep red cover, so I had to make it up myself.

Wrigley's Writings are the songs and monologues of Bernard Wrigley. He is known to some as *The Bolton Bullfrog*, with a rasping, croaking, sandpaper, double-bass voice. The book contains 39 of his works from the 1970s to late 1990s. His humour is robust and often scatological, with the basis of his material being thoroughly northern, e.g. tripe, pies, throat lozenges and black puddings. Not for the shy and retiring.

Both works will benefit from an authentic Lancastrian delivery, so fear not, I shall be adding to my repertoire with these rhymes, but anyone in the Federation can browse through - just contact me.



Notation from beyond the Goblin City - Rhian Collinson

“Through dangers untold and hardships unnumbered I have fought my way here to the castle beyond the Goblin City to take back the child that you have stolen.”

Have you seen “The Labyrinth”? I have it on tape and have watched in with my son a number of times over the years. The quote above seems very much like the experiences I have had getting my first proper notation book completed. Well, the last clause isn't appropriate but it certainly has been a challenge. At last the Hinton book is with the original author, Sue Swift, for final proof reading. I have the words for another Cotswold book already in the pipeline, Badby researched by Jill Griffiths. Having completed one I feel that the next will be easier, but I may be kidding myself.

What next?

My first new initiative isn't really morris, but is English traditional dancing. It stems from a request I had for details of a hornpipe. The only time I have seen such a dance was at Sidmouth in the 1998 John Gasson Jig Competition. Martyn Harvey performed a memorable and spirited Sailor's Hornpipe. Having spoken to him recently I have learned that he has done a significant amount of research into its history and content. As a result of that conversation I hope that he will write up the material he has collected, which the Federation can then publish.

At the recent AGM in Nottingham Rachel Pinkney suggested to Trefor Owen that he should go through his archive of collected material to produce a sequel to the popular “North West Morris Dances”. I understand that he has now started on this project. In the short term, since I have had a number of enquiries during the last year about North West Dances for 6, Trefor has been persuaded to generate some “building blocks” to help teams adapt 8 person dances for 6 people. The first seven figures are given in an article in this newsletter. There will be a second instalment in the spring

And now its time to turn my attention to the minutiae of the organisation of a Border workshop for the Federation.

North West Morris for six dancers - some building blocks
Trefor Owen

Having spent some time considering whether or not to devise six person dances, I have settled on giving "suggestions" for the adaptation of eight person figures for six people. I would prefer to consider them as building blocks for dances rather than constituting a specific set dance and hope that they will act as a catalyst for teams to develop their own repertoire. I plan to have more figures published in the Spring newsletter.

<i>Set formation</i>	<i>Other information</i>
	Single steps, Outside foot start.
2	Long double-ended sticks.
3	4 On the spot = dancing facing the top with appropriate arm movements.
5	6 All figures start facing the top.

Step Up

8 steps, simultaneous movement of all dancers. A cast move but facing front throughout.

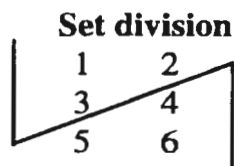
<i>Dancers</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Movement</i>
1 & 2	1	Sideways to the outside.
	2,3,4	Backwards to the rear of the set.
	5	Sideways into set line.
	6,7,8	Forward into original place.
3 & 4	,2	Forward to original position of 1 & 2.
	3	Sideways to the outside.
	4,5,6	Backwards to the rear of the set.
	7	Sideways into set line.
	8	Forward into original place.
5 & 6	1,2,3	Forward to original position of 1 & 2.
	4	Sideways to the outside.
	5,6,7	Backwards to the rear of the set.
	8	Sideways into set line.

Hands

Moving sideways:	Leading hand up, other hand on hip.
Moving forwards:	Create an arch with the inside arms, outside arms down at side.
Moving backwards:	Both hands on hips.

Stars

8 steps, star, cross and change.



Initially, 1, 2 and 3 dance together as do 4, 5 and 6.

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Dancers</i>	<i>Movements</i>						
1 to 4	1, 2, 3 4, 5, 6	Right hand star three quarters of the way round. Left hand star three quarters of the way round. ending: <table style="margin-left: 100px; border: none;"> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> </table>	1	2	4	3	5	6
1	2							
4	3							
5	6							
4/5	3 & 4	Pass Right shoulder to change stars (and hands) so that 4 now dances with 1 & 2 and 3 now dances with 5 and 6.						
5 to 8	1, 2, 4 3, 5, 6	Left hand star full circle back to original place. Right hand star full circle back to original place.						

Hands

Inside arm stretched with tips of sticks touching in the centre of the star. Outside hands on hips.

Into position on 1, change on 4/5, down on 8.

Right and Left

16 steps, top and bottom couples together form one unit and the middle couple forms a separate unit.

<i>Dancers</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Movement</i>
middle couple	1	Step in to meet partner.
	2 - 7	Right hand swing twice round, close together. Inside hand up with sticks crossed, outside hand on hip.
	8/9	Change to:
	10 - 15	Left hand swing twice round, close together. Inside hand up with sticks crossed, outside hand on hip.
	16	To place, hands down.
top and bottom couples	- 4	Right and left through, starting on the side. Tops turn out. 1 & 5 and 2 & 4 pass Right on the side, giving hands, change hands at the corner of the square.
	5 - 8	Pass Left across the set.
	9 - 12	Pass right along the sides.
	13 - 16	Pass left to original place.

Diagonal

32 steps: 12 + 4, 12 + 4

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Dancers</i>	<i>Movements</i>
1 - 4	1 & 6	Cross on diagonal passing Right <i>Note:</i> once in place stay stepping, facing out.
5 - 8	2 & 5	Cross on diagonal passing Right. <i>Note:</i> once in place stay stepping, facing out.
9 - 12	3 & 4	Cross set passing Right. Right hand up, Left hand on hip.
1 - 4	all	All turn single odds Left, evens Right. End facing out

Repeat, passing Left, end facing top.

Hands

Whilst crossing, Right hand up, Left hand on hip.

Whilst on the spot, hands down.

Steps 13 - 16, outside hand up, inside hand on hip.

Weave

16 steps, a hey type of move. The set moves backwards! Lost ground can be regained by lengthening the stride when moving forwards to place.

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Dancers</i>	<i>Movements</i>	<i>path of 1 & 2</i>
1 - 4	1 & 2	Cast outside to move round 3 & 4, end facing each other across the set, between middle and bottom couple. Step on the spot, facing top.	
5 - 8	& 2 3 & 4	Cast inside 5 & 6, turn up at the bottom of the set to end facing the top behind 5 & 6. Start moving, repeating the above pattern.	
9 - 12	3 & 4 5 & 6	Complete their moves. Start moving, repeating the above pattern.	
13 - 16	5 & 6	Complete their moves.	

Hands

When moving, outside hand up, inside hand on hip.

Back to back

16 steps, passing back to back following the track shown but facing across the set through out.



<i>Dancers</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Movement</i>
all	1	Turn to face across the set
	2,3	Cross, passing Right
	4	Sideways
	5,6,7	Backwards passing Left
	8	On the spot
	9,10,11	Cross, passing Left
	12	Sideways
	13,14,15	Backwards passing Right
	16	Turn to face front

Hands

Passing hand up, other hand on hip.

Swing

16 steps. Swing partners, Right and Left handed.

<i>Dancers</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Movement</i>
all	1,2	Forward to meet.
	3 - 6	Swing all the way round.
	7,8	Backwards to place.

Repeat

Hands

Nearest hands up and crossed, other hand on hip.



Noticeboard



ROOT SOURCE -

THE INDISPENSABLE DIRECTORY OF FOLK
AND RELATED ARTS

Established for 35 years, The Folk Directory is undergoing major redevelopment. When published in May 2000, it will be the main directory of the folk world in its broadest sense with a much increased circulation. As well as a comprehensive guide to the "usual folk territory", the publication will cover a wide range of music from Traditional English to Global Dance.

All related art forms will be included with full coverage of venues, agents, promoters and relevant services. Edited by Alan Bearman (Artistic Director of Sidmouth International Festival) it will feature articles by key figures in the areas covered and a forward by one of the folk world's biggest names.

All Entries are Free.

Forms for inclusion are available now from
Root Source, Cecil Sharp House,
2 Regents Park Road,
London NW1 7AY
Tel 0171 485 2206 x205
Fax 0171 284 0534
E mail bearman@btinternet.com

Entries are welcome in the following areas:

Artists, Agents, Managers, Dance Groups, Folk Clubs & Regular Song/ Music Gatherings, Venues, Festivals, Promoters, Organisations, Publishers, Publications, Recording Services, Record Companies, Marketing Services, Event Suppliers, Professional Services, PA and Lighting Services, Media, Education and all conceivable aspects of The Folk World.

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01453 763181- srowley@dial.pipex.com

Morris in the Dome Update

At going to press there were 60 teams provisionally booked for Dancing in the Dome, and we are having to stress provisional as there has been no confirmation yet on the final details of numbers and tickets. The current proposal is that there will be up to three teams to share a performance spot, that there will be three performances between 12 and 5pm, each performance being 30-45 mins. There are five performance venues, and teams will be told which on the day, some are in the area out side the Dome, but at least one performance will be in the Dome. As soon as there is firm confirmation of details the teams provisionally booked will be informed.

The response was excellent- there were 75 teams who offered specific dates and 55 teams who expressed an interest but offered no dates. I took all of those offering dates, and allocated them in the order that I received them up to and just beyond the closing date, and ensured a mix of styles for any specific date. 15 teams were unsuccessful, but I still had six dates when I could fit teams in, so these were offered to the 15 unsuccessful teams and the 55 teams who expressed an interest, on a first come first serve basis. To save on postage (the last posting on this cost me £40) I will only be replying to the teams who are suc-

cessful- so if you applied on the second round, and haven't heard from me already- sorry you weren't successful- but I will keep you on the waiting list if any other dates come up.

I have asked the people who have been provisionally booked to confirm that they are still available for those dates (two teams have already told me that they can not do it.) **If you have been informed that you have been provisionally booked and have not yet confirmed to me by Dec 21st that you can still do the date, I will have to assume that you are not available, and will offer the date to someone else.** I have to have a cut off date so that I can send the spare dates out to the waiting list. This is because we have to start planning the programmes that will be published.

I am still receiving the original forms with people either an expression of interest or giving specific dates. The original closing date I gave was in September, and I do think that responding in the middle of November is unrealistic. If you haven't heard back from me at all, then you have been unsuccessful, and you are not on the waiting list. I am trying to be as fair and as equitable as possible and to work with the 120 teams who did respond by the closing date.

At the end of October I did have one call from some one who had only just picked up the information from the previous secretary, and tried to get me to offer him one of the spare dates, but I declined saying that it would be unfair on the 120 teams who had replied on time. I also had a letter from one of the successful teams who had been provisionally booked, asking if they could bring a foreign team of dancers to share their spot. Considering as how this is supposed to be for English traditional dancing and in both the last news letter, and in my letter to the provisional list I had stressed that there was a problem with numbers and that teams might be restricted (or by implication even cut off the list) I was not amused by this

suggestion. I wrote back saying that this was not on, and that the 70 teams on the waiting list would not be happy if a foreign team was dancing in their stead. The team wrote back saying they thought I was being harsh, and suggesting that maybe I had taken on too much. I do love it when member teams are so supportive!

We are also in discussion with the Dome people about having a specific show related to English Traditional dancing- either a display of the different styles of dance (as many as they will allow us to show), and /or a show of different seasonal dance related customs. We are still in discussion regarding that, and again if there are any firm details it will be distributed. Because of the costs and shortness of time, it might have to go out on the e-mail- so if you do have an e-mail contact for your team it is important that it goes to Kevin Taylor, so that he can add you to the MF Net mailing List

So- will the Dome be completed on time? Will we get all our dancers into the Dome? These are all questions we look forward to 2000 to bring us answers!

Janet Dowling



Its Survey Time Again!

Enclosed with your registration forms, which you receive separately from the news letter, are two requests for information.

You may recall, those of you with long memories, that four years ago I did an Morris Federation Age Analysis survey, which had responses from 164

teams. The information suggested that the average age of a Morris dancer in the Morris Federation was 39.5, that there was a reasonable spread across the ages, with most numbers in the 35-44 age group, that there were on average 19 people in each team, of whom two on average danced with another team. By extrapolating these figures to all the known Morris teams, we hypothesised that there were about 11,200 dancing in Morris teams in the UK, about 5,200 were women and 6,000 were men.

I now propose to do another survey, with the same questions to see if there is any difference in the profile- are we getting older, are we getting younger, are we staying the same age, are the numbers going up or down, and what is the gender split. These are all questions that we have asked over the past few years, and now we can check it out against the benchmark we took four years ago in the Morris Federation. It is important that we do this so that we can be realistic about planning for the future both within the Federation and in individual teams. I would ask you to make sure that you fill it in and send it back, as the more people that respond the better picture we will get.

If no one has asked you your age recently, then it hasn't been filled in!

The other questionnaire is to find out how many "things" people have associated with the dance- animals, beasts, fools, mascots (alive or stuffed), as this will help with the planning of some events next year

Many thanks for all your help. Results of both surveys will be published in the Summer newsletter.

Janet Dowling



Andrea M Watts
54 Montgomery Road
Sheffield S7 1LQ
0114 258 5283

Family.Watts@Virgin.net

Re :- MORRIS FEDERATION AGM 1999

The AGM this year was very ably organised by Mortimer's Morris. In thanking Mortimer's, many superlatives were used by our Committee, and we would like to echo these. Much thought and hard work had gone into the planning, and all went extremely smoothly, a hard act to follow!

We (Gift Rapper) would like to make a few comments by way of a review.

Food first, which is important when away from home for a weekend. The lunches and evening meal were very good. Some complaints were made about "no toast" for breakfast, however! Also, why were we issued with green tickets which no-one checked at any stage, and the meal tickets which were not checked?

A personal note from one team member who arrived late and found the person on Reception very unhelpful. Speaking for Tour B, however, the Tour Guides were very good, and their waistcoats, and the itinerary was very relaxed. It was nice to have good quality busses, and we enjoyed dancing in the pub at lunchtime.

The Rotunda was excellent for the massed display. There were some people watching who knew nothing about the Morris Federation, though, so it would have been useful to have had some information leaflets about the event and about the Morris Federation. Although the continuity was extremely well planned so as to streamline the performance of so many teams, we would have liked to have had some form of introduction such as the name of the team, and where they were from.

We would like to single out Vicky Johnson for making the Ceilidh so enjoyable. It is often very disappointing to attend a Ceilidh in a room full of keen dancers, only to be dished up a menu of Nottingham Swing etc.

The Doc Rowe Collection Support Group

Many people who visit the traditional rituals and calendar customs which abound in Britain will have spotted 'Doc' Rowe, usually garlanded with bags of audio and/or video recording equipment, stills camera poised, chatting to the mummers or the dancers. Many will have got to know him over the 30+ years that he has spent documenting our traditions. Some people may be aware of the volume of material that he has amassed over the years, which includes contemporary recording of customs and traditions - in both sound and vision., vernacular forms including song, dance, dialect, stories, legends, ritual dance and drama. Here's an idea of how extensive this collection is!

PHOTOGRAPHIC

- NEGATIVES (black and white) 40,000
- NEGATIVES (colour) 1,500
- PRINTS (from above) 2,500
- CONTACT SHEETS for all negatives and other collections
- TRANSPARENCIES 32,000

AUDIO

- OPEN REEL approx. 3,500 hours
- CASSETTE 4,000 cassettes
- RECORDS approx 1500 (including BBC transcription discs)

VIDEO

- MASTER TAPE approx. 900 hours

- VIEWING COPIES (of masters) 30 hours
- OTHER RELATED MATERIAL 2,000 hours

FILM

- 16mm approx. 70 hours
- 8mm 8 hours
- 9.5mm 20 min

MISCELLANEOUS

- Extensive book library
- Field notes
- Manuscript collections
- Indices of other collections
- Newspaper cuttings

This is obviously a very significant collection....**and it Needs a Home!**

It was thought that the collection had found a permanent home in Bristol, courtesy of a very generous action on the part of a media professional, but this has been found to be impractical and another solution has to be found. The problem is to be addressed in two stages.

Stage 1

The first job is to get the collection to safe storage. A suitable store has been identified and will cost approximately £145 pounds per month. It is expected that this temporary solution will last for between 12 and 24 months. We hope to raise the finance for this temporary move by sponsorship from individuals

Stage 2

The second stage is to find a permanent home for the collection at a location where it is accessible to researchers, media producers, etc. The eventual aim is to digitise much of the collection for easy electronic access over the internet. Negotiations with a suitable institution are already underway and if agreement can be reached, the new home could be settled very soon. The move and installation will take some time, but the collection could be in a permanent home by this time next year. Relevant

funding bodies are being approached to finance stage two.

We need Sponsors!

We need sponsors to put this scheme into operation. It's not expensive! For example, if 75 people gave £2.00 per month for a year, the rent on the temporary storage could be raised. This is the equivalent of buying Doc a pint of beer per month, and how many of us wouldn't buy a deserving person a drink?

We promise you - he won't drink the money away! It will go into a bank account specially opened for the purpose and the only payments made from this account will be for the rent. The regular sponsors will become members of **The Doc Rowe Collection Support Group** and will be granted some preferential access to the collection should they wish. There will also be an occasional newsletter, distributed by email or snailmail

If you feel that this is a worthwhile collaboration that you would like to support, you can do so by giving a small sum of money by regular standing order (say £6 per quarter or more), or by giving a single donation, possibly repeated at a later date if necessary.

If you are a potential sponsor, please contact **John Adams** get details of the account and/or further information at **21, Halifax Rd, Ripponden, West Yorks, HX6 4AH**

Any donations by cheque should be made out to **The Doc Rowe Collection Support Group**.

(Editors Note. At the last Federation committee meeting we agreed to contribute £350 on behalf of the Morris Federation.)

Any Other Business

...this should have been included under any other business, at the AGM, but, carried away by election fever, it was missed.

Proposal for the 1999 Morris Federation AGM

1. That the Morris Federation should run suitable workshops to assist Federation clubs and members who do not fully understand the voting system, and who wish to vote at future AGMs, to become fully conversant with our wonderful new system. As an incentive, those taking part and reaching a suitable standard could be presented with an illuminated certificate to show their competence.
2. If it is felt that the financial burden of running workshops up and down the country would be too great for the Morris Federation, and that lottery funding cannot be attracted to assist, then we would like to suggest that a suitably detailed manual should be produced as an alternative.

FYLDE COAST CLOGGERS OF LYTHAM ST. ANNES

We are an all lady clogging team who are desperate for musicians, any variety! Please contact us if you or any of your friends/colleagues would be interested in joining our team (as musicians in particular).

Sheila Mogan,
012536 739884

KNOCKHUNDRED SHUTTLES **AT THE LONDON PALLADIUM** **SUNDAY 9th MAY**

Intrada

Out of the blue, we received a call from Beth of the Federation asking if we would like to dance at the Palladium as part of 'Dance Power' - an event in aid of the British Red Cross. Angela Rippon would be producing and Hugh Wooldridge directing. Would we? Wow. Fame and fortune at last. Performers were to include Jane Torvill, Wayne Sleep, Bruce Forsyth. River Dance and Stomp. One representative dance act was required from each of the UK countries, which was where we came in.

The Squire chose 'Preston Royal' for our 5 minute spot. We had 2 specific practices - the first to make sure we still knew the dance (who knows anything after a Practice season?) and the second, to time our getting on and off, the appropriate numbers of As and Bs etc. As we were likely to be introduced to Princess Alexandra there was talk of a bowing workshop.....

As part of the Red Cross advertising, all performers were asked for the address list of our Fan Club. Much merriment all round.

Moderato

Sunday dawned grey and forbidding. We got up at 0550, even though the coach was not picking us up until 0830. Fresh flowers were picked. All-bran was noticeably absent from the breakfast table.

All kit had been washed and ironed, then washed and ironed again to make sure. Clogs gleamed (why don't they always?). Only rubbers were allowed - no irons. Wayne Sleep would not have been best pleased to come on after us and dance on a pile of matchwood.

The coach picked us up in 3 main batches. Nervous conversation ebbed and flowed until we were at last dumped - about 1/4 mile from the Palladium. And with all the gear to carry. Kit, hats, flowers, instruments, not to mention the bass drum. Why does no-one ever want to carry the bass drum?

Vivace

We were quickly directed to a dressing room with our name on the door. Cor! Our rehearsal time was late morning for 10 minutes. So who needed a rehearsal? We knew the dance, didn't we. Well, didn't we? We'd already practised getting on and off the stage but the entrances and exits weren't quite as we'd expected. Nor for that matter were the wonderful maze of narrow corridors that weave all round the back of the theatre, linking up every dressing room on every floor.

The musicians marched on to 1A, stood and played for another, then the dancers marched on to 2Bs and straight into the dance. Clockwork! Angela Rippon, waiting in the wings said 'brilliant' - well, she would, wouldn't she. I can't remember exactly what else she said, but my wife translated it to 'teeth, tits and tonsils', a phrase that I understand is much used in Appalachian. Overall, slightly worrying, as the rehearsals went a little too well.

So now with many hours to kill, what should we do? The usual mixture of sitting outside the nearby pub and/or shopping. To ensure a little Dutch courage but not too much, we limited ourselves to a maximum of 4 pints each, which was quite difficult given the time we had to kill.

Back to the dressing room and now a flurry of activity. Space was rather tight with everyone changing at once. 'Damn it - forgot my cufflinks. Who can remember where the toilet is?' Anyone got a pin? We then spent more time sitting around in kit outside the stage door, watching various people we mostly didn't recognise, signing autographs. Nobody wanted ours. Fools! One day they will. But there again, maybe they won't.

And so we eventually lined up behind the stage, legs strangely distant, brains quite empty. Looking nonchalant - even bored. Up and down the corridors, performers were doing incredible stretching exercises, modelling for bendy toys and suchlike. I didn't know legs could do things like that.

Then we were on. Switch to auto-pilot, but not too auto in case you need to improvise. Strangely, we couldn't see much of the audience - they were at best, shadowy heads somewhere 'out there'. This was wonderful news; a bit like a child covering his eyes so you can't see him. Believe me, I was that child. This time, the teeth and tonsils (well, 2 out of 3 wasn't bad) bit worked. Have you ever noticed how women dancers smile and laugh all the time, whereas men only do so when they go wrong? It's funny how one reacts to fear.

And then it was over. Euphoria, blase, euphoria again and then back to the pub. Everyone laughing hysterically and calling each other 'daaarling'.

Coda

After the massed finale, all performers repaired to the stage as Princess Alexandra and entourage went walkabouts and chatted to (some of) us oiks. A very pleasant lady I understand.

Then the apres-performance party. Food, drink and further milling about, unfortunately cut short by the arrival of our coach - 1/4 mile away again. After a celebratory cup of tea, I eventually made it to bed at 0330 Monday, only to get up again 3 hours later to go to work.

Ah, the roar of the greasepaint; the smell of the crowds. Or something like that.

IVFDF 2000

February 25th-27th 2000

Singin' an' dancin' an' blether at the OOI, but.

The Inter-Varsity Folk Dance Festival has brought you fifty years of music and dance, it now returns to Glasgow after years in the wilderness. Don't miss out on the 50th IVFDF, you might have to wait another 30 years before it returns to the West of Scotland!



IVFDF 2000 exists to promote knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the traditions of the folk dance and music of the British Isles and beyond.

“Flashback” a personal view

, (President note. I met Jeff in the hotel I was staying in at Sidmouth. We had both seen “Flashback”- the musical dance performance describing the meeting of Kimber and Sharp, and their subsequent relationship, written by Sue Swift and Jim Woodlands. His views over the breakfast table were interesting, so I asked him to write it up as a review of the performance.).

Not being at my best in the mornings I was more than usually nonplussed to be told that as I had very strong views about the Performance of "Flashback" at Sidmouth, could I write about them. This was made even worse because I **didn't** have any strong views about the performance itself, but merely about some people's reaction to it, from the Pavlovian braying of a gang of strident female sounding voices the moment women's morris was as much as mentioned to those who believed the whole thing was completely invalid because Headington wore nylon shirts or the Hastings Jack In The Green Man used leaves not imported until 1901 - and couldn't resist telling anyone within earshot! Yes, this was a production which could be used to merely reinforce your already held prejudices, which was very sad, but only for those who chose to view it that way, or had read more into the programme notes than was there.

My own feelings are that whereas the prom is what makes Sidmouth so special, the main stage, especially in the Evening, is the 'Public Face' of the Festival, where newcomers tend to start off; and where you cannot guarantee a folk- literate audience let alone a dance literate one, and so the events have to be tailored to fit. It is a venue for demonstration and entertainment (hopefully by enlightenment?!) but certainly not a venue for matters of necessarily great scholarship or fanatical detail if that gets in the way of performance, (there was, after all, a workshop the following day for

that, and for those inspired by the performance to take things further)

For those prepared to accept this, and put any current detailed knowledge of the topic 'on hold' there was an awful lot to be gained in this necessarily brief scamper through half a century and beyond, as evidenced by the innumerable little huddles discussing it afterwards. It started off by reminding us that things very much existed pre-Sharp and hadn't yet died out completely (eg Handsworth, Bampton). It was , however not in a format to his liking, and he appeared to want to make it fit his ideas.

The figures of Sharp and Kimber were then the narrators of the story of their meeting and the subsequent collections/developments (of Cotswold in particular but not exclusively) and linked many examples of most forms of dancing with the performers excelling themselves. There were lovely contrasts between (say) Bean Setting by Headington with its tiny set, total introversion and total exclusion of any audience - no sign of a social element or performance here - and the 'Stepback' crew and their unashamed orientation towards stage performance and impressing the audience; and where do you fit the Capering Crew - seemingly doing it for themselves but in a way that is basically very traditional but with sufficient trimmings to make it very entertaining (ALL the side as horses??) and hence aimed at and needing an audience for best effect?

Flashback started off with Sharp bemoaning the fact that this folk music (and dance) was only surviving as a variety act and then we have Stepback - was this a hidden message?

'Watership Down' was just a collection of stories he told his children on the long drive home, but has subsequently been told that it is, actually, a savage indictment of twentieth century bourgeois society, I am sure the originators of Flashback thought it was a good way of telling the Sharp and Kimber story and would be amazed (amused?) by the feelings engendered by it. That they created a work on the main Sidmouth stage which got the story across simply, amusingly, understandably without preaching and with minimum diversions from whatever you believe to be the truth to an audience in a large arena was nothing short of astounding. they and all the performers should be very proud.

PS. Yes - I really enjoyed it, and the free and frank exchanges of views afterwards made the struggle up the hill even more worthwhile - if you want a good row I haven't exhausted my supply of opinions yet....

Jeff

New Committee Members

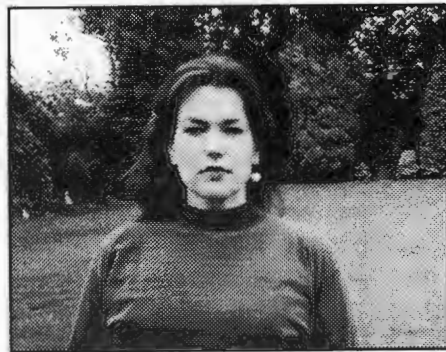
I thought it appropriate to introduce you to the new members of the committee, who will take over their posts in January 2000.

Our new President is John Bacon. Secretary is Fee Lock, and Archive officer is Adrian Williams.



Morris Federation Winter 1999

John Bacon,
57, East End Lane,
Ditchling,
Hassocks,
East Sussex BN6 8UR
01273 843938
E-mail jandabacon@aol.com



Fee Lock,
28, Fairstone Close,
Hastings,
Sussex, TN35 5EZ
01424 436052
FeeLock@hotmail.com



Adrian Williams,
20, Verne Drive,
Ampthill,
Beds, MK45 2PS
Adrian-williams@beeb.net

Good Luck to all!!!

**YORKSHIRE
COAST
MORRIS**

**Scarborough Fayre Morris Dance Festival
Friday 30 June - Sunday 2 July 2000**

**Yorkshire Coast Morris will soon be 21 years old. Come
to our next Weekend of Dance and help us celebrate!**

Dance tours to coastal and/or country locations

++++++

Grand Ceilidh Saturday Night with BEDLAM

++++++

Torchlight procession

++++++

Seafront procession Sunday morning

(weather permitting)



STILL ONLY £16.00

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No meals are included but facilities are available on and adjacent to camp site.

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350078] or [e-mail: wbostock@mistral.co.uk], for more details.**